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CONFIDENTIAL.

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F.O.

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PART 6.

F.O. 403/203

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TUNIS.

203

1894.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
1	Colonel Chermside to Sir A. Nicolson	7 Confidential	Jan. 20, 1894	Tripoli frontier. Porte has no intention of renewing negotiations. The Turks hope to assert their authority over the tribes up to the line claimed. Rumours of fighting further south	1
2	Consul-General Drummond Hay	4	Feb. 5,	Ghadames. Authorities at Gabes wish to send a caravan there, guaranteeing its safety ..	2
3	" "	7	12,	Attacks on French administration in the "Rappel"	2
4	" "	8	15,	Rumours of a projected Sicilian rising in Tunis	3
5	" "	9	21,	Bizerta and coast defences. Transmits newspaper article	3
6	" "	10	23,	Special troops for employment in extreme south of Algeria. Extract from "Dépêche Tunisienne"	4
7	To Sir C. Ford	62 Confidential	Mar. 12,	Bizerta. Count Tornielli has inquired whether anything is known as to erection of new forts	5
8	Consul-General Drummond Hay	12	15,	Bizerta. Mr. Bourke has agreed to sell land to military authorities	5
9	" "	13	19,	Ghadames. A caravan has been sent from Gabes and another is being prepared. No travellers are allowed to proceed in that direction (see No. 2)	5
10	" "	14	20,	Bizerta. Transmits copy of agreement for sale of land by Mr. Bourke	6
11	" "	15	26,	Bizerta. Works have been commenced on Mr. Bourke's land at Dar-el-Coudia	6
12	" "	16	31,	Bizerta. Land has been bought for an arsenal and a railway will be made to it	7
13	Sir E. Monson	84 Mos Conf.	31,	Bizerta. Count Kálnoky's remarks as to the importance of. It will be a second Toulon	7
14	Consul-General Drummond Hay	17	Apr. 5,	Bizerta. Particulars respecting new works and line of railway	7
15	Memorandum communicated by Count Tornielli	Confidential	18,	Bizerta. Information regarding the works in progress	8
16	To Marquis of Dufferin	155	18,	Bizerta. French Ambassador said the port was being improved for commercial purposes	8
17	Consul-General Drummond Hay	19	24,	Bizerta. Works at Dar-el-Coudia. Extract from "l'Unione"	8
18	" "	20	25,	Works at Tunis, Susa, and Sfax. Concession to a French firm for	9
19	" "	23	May 4.	Lake Ishkel. Plan for raising its level to obtain water power for the new arsenal ..	15
20	" "	24	9,	Mr. Mifsud's mining rights. Reply from French Resident, who recognizes them (see Part V, No. 55)	15
21	Intelligence Division	Confidential	19,	Ghadames. Count d'Aspromont says French wish to deflect its trade to Tunis. ..	16
22	Consul-General Drummond Hay	26	18,	Bizerta. Fort commenced on Mr. Bourke's land	16
23	" "	27	23,	Cape Boa has been surveyed by French officers	17
24	" "	28	23,	Ghadames. M. Leclercq was refused permission to visit. Question of French occupation is referred to in "Dépêche Tunisienne" ..	17
25	" "	34	June 23,	Bizerta. Report of his visit. Information respecting two forts, the railway, canal, arsenal, harbour, and Lake Ishkel ..	17
26	" "	35	30,	Bizerta. Fort at Dar-el-Coudia has been made a military post	18
27	" "	38	July 23,	Bizerta will not compete with Tunis as a commercial harbour, although it may be used as a coaling station. Superior advantages possessed by Tunis	19
28	" "	40	Aug 2,	Fort at Carthage nearly completed. Two large guns recently mounted	20
29	" "	41 Confidential	11,	Tripoli frontier. Efforts to divert Ghadames trade from Tripoli. Extension of French influence in the south	20
30	Intelligence Division	..	21,	Ghadames. French designs upon. Newspaper extracts. Tripoli should be preserved as a buffer state between Tunis and Egypt ..	21

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
31	Consul-General Drummond Hay	43	Sept. 5, 1894	Fort at Carthage is finished. Four large guns mounted	21
32	To Mr. Edwardes ..	207	10.	Ghadames. Italian Government have received reports of French activity in that direction ..	22
33	To Sir P. Currie ..	284	12,	Ghadames. To bring to notice of Porte the reports of French proceedings ..	22
34	Sir P. Currie ..	451	Oct. 3,	Ghadames. The Porte is aware of what is going on; they regret that their proposals for recognition of a "Hinterland" extending to Lake Tchad were not encouraged, but they are not likely to attempt to restrain French movements ..	22
35	To Sir P. Currie ..	311A	10,	Italy and Tripoli. Rustem Pasha's inquiry as to report that an Italian expedition is in contemplation..	23
36	To Count Tornielli ..	Confidential	16,	Ghadames. Substance of No. 34 ..	23
37	To Sir P. Currie ..	317	22,	Tripoli frontier. Italian Government suggest that Porte should be urged to come to an understanding with France, especially with regard to the "Hinterland" ..	23
38	Consul-General Drummond Hay	48	22,	Bizerta. Large guns are expected for the new forts ..	24
39	Mr. Edwardes ..	219	25,	Tripoli frontier. Instructions sent to Count Tornielli (see No. 37) ..	24
40	To Mr. Edwardes ..	67	30,	Tripoli frontier. Sir P. Currie has been instructed in the sense desired ..	25
41	Consul-General Drummond Hay	51	Nov. 15,	Bizerta. Four large guns have arrived for Dar-el-Coudia and Djebel Roumadia forts ..	25
42	" ..	53	28,	Bizerta. M. Millet's visit. In his speech he said that the natural advantages of the country would be fully developed, and shipping would be attracted by the low tariff ..	25
43	" ..	54	Dec. 12,	French military command will, in future, be held by a General of Division ..	26

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Tunis.

PART 6.No. 1.

Colonel Chermiside to Sir A. Nicolson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, February 5.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)

Constantinople, January 20, 1894.

Sir,
I HAVE the honour to inclose a Memorandum on the Tripoli-Tunis frontier, which I have the honour to request may be forwarded for transmission to the Military Intelligence Division, War Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum I (continuation of Memorandum IV of March 6, 1893.)

Tunis-Tripoli Frontier.

(Confidential.)

1. THE Ottoman authorities sent officers to Tripoli last spring to report, and in case of a Boundary Commission, eventually to be the Turkish Delegates.

2. A Tripoli-Tunisian Commission consisting of above Turkish members, of Tunisian members, and of Commandant Lebilland, the French officer commanding of the Eastern Tunis frontier district, met at Zonara (Dhonara) in spring 1893 to exchange views.

3. The "Hamudu" Bey Firman advanced by the Turks (*vide* Memorandum IV, March 6, 1893) was declared to be apocryphal by the Tunisians, and the Turks, I believe, virtually admitted its inaccuracy. It was proposed that as regards the nationality and territorial bounds of border tribes, the payment of "tithe" to Tripoli or Tunis should carry great weight as to decision.

4. At the beginning of the summer heats the Commission separated after having merely embodied the views of the Delegates in a *procès-verbal*.

5. The Turkish officers reported to their Government, and the latter has no intention of renewing negotiations or appointing Boundary Commissioners, partly owing, as pointed out in former Memorandums, to the views of the two sides as to a basis being so divergent, partly owing to the Turkish objection to a Joint Commission on which a French officer should have an official position.

6. The Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs has spoken to both the British and Italian Ambassadors in this sense, and either he or the Grand Vizier added that it was hoped little by little to assert the Ottoman authority over the frontier tribes and to occupy the unsettled districts, which probably means to advance gradually up to, or as near as possible to, the line claimed.

7. The Turkish authorities appear to believe that for reasons of general policy their action will not call forth French protests.

8. The most fruitful source of frontier troubles is the collection of taxes after harvest. The Turkish Government has reinforced the frontier garrisons and raised the effective of corps (infantry battalions) to over 500, and appears this year to have been successful in minimising the usual troubles. I have heard rumours, but no details, as to fighting further south, namely between Touaregs of the French "Hinterland" and the Tripolitan population of Ghadames. I have not yet seen any confirmation of the statements of this paragraph by Her Majesty's Consul-General.

9. There have been rumours of the French forces being reinforced, but the command remains a brigade.

10. It has recently been stated on Turkish authority that "Bwij-el-Biban," the advanced frontier station on the Mediterranean littoral, claimed by the Turks, has been occupied by them.

11. Should M.I.D. not have a copy of my Memorandum above-named, I can furnish one and also a trace of the debatable frontier-lines.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, Colonel.

January 15, 1894.

No. 2.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 5, 1894.

I HAVE learnt from a reliable source that the authorities at Gabes are planning the dispatch of a caravan to Ghadames for the purpose of opening up trade with that place. Proposals have been made by General Allegro, Governor of Gabes, to the chief merchants there on the subject, and it appears that the authorities intend to support the enterprise and to guarantee the safety of the caravan.

The markets established of late years by the Government of the Protectorate, in the Oases of Kebilli and Tatahouin, on the Tripolitan frontiers, have undoubtedly had a reassuring effect on the minds of the Tuareg tribes inhabiting the country lying between Tunis and Ghadames, who were formerly in constant warfare with their neighbours, and entered the Regency only on marauding expeditions.

It seems probable that, as these advances are being made to the Gabes traders, the authorities have reasons for believing that the caravans will be able to perform the journey and enter Ghadames unmolested.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 3.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 7.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 12, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that several articles have lately appeared in the French newspaper "Le Rappel" attacking the administration of the Protectorate, and complaining of the excessive powers vested in the Resident-General.

It would appear from the tone of the articles that they have been inspired by French colonists suffering from the present depressed condition of trade and from unsuccessful agricultural operations.

The French Chambers of Commerce and of Agriculture have communicated to the French Government their disapproval of the publications, and given assurances of their entire confidence in the energy and zeal of M. Rouvier.

The latter returned to Tunis on the 11th instant, having, it is stated, succeeded in making arrangements in Paris for the commencement, at an early period, of the projected railroads and the construction of the new ports of Susa and Sfax.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 4.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 8.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 15, 1894.

RUMOURS of a disquieting nature have been current in this town for the last few days, referring to the probability of a rising of Sicilians against the French.

The "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 11th instant, commenting on the matter, states that menaces of approaching "Tunisian Vespers" have been circulated amongst the population, whose appeals for protection have decided the military authorities to take precautionary measures for the safety of the public.

The journal alludes also to the unusually large immigration of Sicilians, and expresses a hope that they have visited Tunis solely in search of employment, and will not avail themselves of the hospitality accorded to them to foment disturbances.

I have also heard that the troops have been confined to barracks for several days, and that the garrison is fully prepared for all eventualities.

I have not had an opportunity of speaking to the Resident on the subject, but I met my Italian colleague, who assured me that, as far as the Sicilians are concerned, there is no foundation whatever for the scare.

According to information I have obtained from private sources it is believed that the alarm originated from a complaint of a French officer to the General that he had been assaulted in the streets by several armed Italians, who had made use of threatening language regarding the French, as reported in the "Dépêche."

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 5.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 21, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an extract from an interesting article published in "La Dépêche de Toulouse" of the 12th instant, with regard to Bizerte and the defences of the French coasts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Extract from "La Dépêche Tunisienne" of February 18, 1894.

BIZERTE et la défense des côtes :

A cette question qui nous touche de si près, la "Dépêche de Toulouse" consacre, dans son numéro du 12 courant, les lignes suivantes :—

"La liberté de mouvements est indispensable à nos escadres pour agir au gré des circonstances et produire en temps et lieu opportuns ce que le Ministre de la Guerre appelait, dans son récent discours justement remarqué, l'événement décisif. Avec Toulon, seul port de guerre dans la Méditerranée, cette liberté de mouvements n'existe pas et nos escadres, au lieu de pouvoir voler à plein cœur comme l'oiseau de proie, n'ont qu'une liberté relative, comme l'oiseau qu'un fil tient lié à sa cage.

"De cette considération résulte la nécessité d'avoir un port utilisable pour assurer le ravitaillement et le mouillage abrité d'une escadre sur les côtes du sud de la Méditerranée. J'écrivais, ici même, en 1892 : 'Pour que notre flotte de guerre puisse agir en toute liberté et jeter au moment voulu tout son poids dans la bataille, il faut organiser un port militaire à Bizerte et en faire un pivot d'opérations comparable à la Maddalena et à Malte.'

"Bizerte est, en effet, le seul point de la côte susceptible d'être organisé d'une manière suffisante. La côte Africaine est très pauvre en bons mouillages; les côtes en sont peu échanquées, et, dans les endroits où existent des golfes, la profondeur est

tellement faible que les navires de guerre ne peuvent approcher à moins de 600 à 700 mètres.

"Bizerte, au contraire, possède un bassin naturel parfaitement abrité et pouvant, à lui seul, contenir toutes les flottes de la Méditerranée. Sa situation stratégique, au saillant le plus avancé de la côte Africaine, est en même temps exceptionnellement favorable, et cette coïncidence heureuse désigne cette position comme la meilleure à utiliser.

"On a commencé l'organisation; le chenal faisant communiquer le lac intérieur à la haute mer est déjà creusé et on évalue à onze millions seulement les sommes nécessaires pour une organisation maritime complète. Onze millions, c'est assurément une somme importante, mais un instant de réflexion suffit à montrer combien elle est minime en rapport du résultat qu'elle permet d'atteindre."

No. 6.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 10.)

My Lord,

Tunis, February 23, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, according to the inclosed extract from a local journal, the French Minister for War has decided to organize a special body of troops, consisting of cavalry and infantry, who will occupy the districts lying to the extreme south of Algeria, and the principal routes leading to countries under French influence.

The uniform of "les troupes Sahariennes," as they are termed, will be specially adapted for service in the Desert, and it is intended to mount the cavalry on "mehari" camels.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Extract from "La Dépêche Tunisienne" of February 9, 1894.

TROUPES Sahariennes:

"L'Écho d'Oran" et, après lui, "l'Indépendant de Constantine," annoncent que le Ministre de la Guerre, sur la proposition du Général Hervé, Commandant le 19^e Corps d'Armée, vient de décider la création de troupes spéciales dites troupes Sahariennes.

Ces troupes vont avoir pour mission exclusive d'occuper et de surveiller d'une façon permanente l'extrême sud Algérien.

Elles comprendront de l'infanterie et de la cavalerie.

Elles occuperont les voies principales conduisant aux pays où nous voulons établir définitivement l'influence Française tels que les pays Touaregs, le Tidikelt, l'Aoulef, le Touat, l'Aouguerrou, le Gourara.

On recrutera de préférence des hommes du Gourara et des nègres.

La décision Ministérielle, sur les données du Général Hervé, fixe l'uniforme qui sera donné aux troupes Sahariennes.

L'infanterie aura des "sabbat elkhafala," espèce de brodequin à lacets, en cuir de chèvre et à la semelle en peau de chameau; son costume se composera d'une gandoura et de deux pantalons, l'un en toile blanche, l'autre en toile bleue ayant la forme des pantalons de tirailleurs Algériens. Cette partie du vêtement sera retenue par une ceinture en cuir.

La chéchia sera munie d'un voile nommé "cheche." Ces voiles seront en blanc et en bleu et serviront à cacher le visage. Le "kheit" pour ceindre la tête sera en corde de poils de chameau et aura 10 mètres de longueur.

Pendant la marche au soleil, les hommes seront munis d'un large chapeau de paille. Ils auront enfin pour se couvrir la nuit et pour se garantir contre le mauvais temps un petit burnous, affectant la forme des pèlerines à capuchon, en poils de chameau. Ce burnous ne tombera que jusqu'aux mollets.

La cavalerie sera montée, non sur des chevaux, mais sur des "méharas."

Ces troupes spéciales seront placées sous les ordres du Commandant Supérieur du cercle de Ghardaïa.

Pour faciliter le recrutement des Sahariens, on leur promettra formellement de ne jamais les envoyer dans le Tell.

No. 7.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir C. Ford.

(No. 62. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 12, 1894.

THE Italian Ambassador called at this Office to-day and inquired whether any information had reached Her Majesty's Government with regard to the erection of some new fortifications at Bizerta. His Excellency proceeded to say that his Government had asked the French Government about them, and had received an answer to the effect that the works of Bizerta had been undertaken in consequence of the presence of an unusually large number of Italian troops in Sicily. He could only regard this as a colourable pretext, because it was notorious that the troops had been sent to Sicily on account of internal troubles.

Her Majesty's Government have not heard anything of the fortifications referred to by Count Tornielli, and his Excellency has been so informed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 8.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received March 19.)

(No. 12.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 15, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 11 of the 25th February, I have to inform your Lordship that Mr. Bourke has agreed to sell about 6 acres of land on his property at Bizerta to the French military authorities.

I shall transmit to your Lordship shortly, by Italian mail, a copy of the Agreement, and of the plan of the land, where the site selected for the fortress will be found marked red. It tallies precisely with the position described in my despatch No. 52 of the 15th August, 1892.

According to the Agreement Mr. Bourke will be paid about 60*l.* an acre, and be permitted to use the military road, which will be completed by the 1st October next.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 9.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 13.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 19, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4 of the 5th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a caravan was formed last month by the Governor of Gabes and left for Ghadames in charge of Tuaregs, mounted on "mehari" camels.

No news has been received up to this date of the caravan. Nevertheless, General Allegro is making preparations for the dispatch of a fresh expedition, and is endeavouring to interest an influential British trader in the enterprise, who has communicated with me on the subject.

The military authorities, on the other hand, place obstacles in the way of all travellers, including even Frenchmen and persons in search of sport, who desire to cross the Tunisian frontiers and to penetrate into the Algerian "Hinterland."

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 10.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 14.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 20, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of an Agreement concluded between Mr. Terence Bourke and the French military authorities relating to the sale of a portion of his property situated near Bizerta and also of a plan of the site which was annexed to that document.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Agreement.

JE Soussigné, Terence Bourke, propriétaire, demeurant à Bizerte, déclare consentir à vendre au Gouvernement Français, au prix de 30 centimes le mètre carré et suivant les conditions énumérées ci-après, les terrains désignés ainsi qu'il suit:—

1. Une parcelle de terre, de forme irrégulière, d'une superficie de $2\frac{1}{2}$ à 3 hectares, située au Djebel Roumadia, sur l'emplacement figurée sur le croquis ci-annexé.
2. Une bande de terrain de 7 mètres environ de largeur, sur toute la traversée de ma propriété par le chemin projeté, reliant la parcelle précitée à la route de Tunis, près de la fontaine d'Aïn Bittar, ainsi qu'il est figuré en a, b, c, sur le croquis.

Conditions de la vente:

1. Je me réserve le droit de circuler librement sur la partie du chemin projeté, entre le point a, voisin de la fontaine d'Aïn Bittar, et le point b; toutefois, exception est faite pour les véhicules lourdement chargés, servant à l'exploitation des carrières et à tout autre usage industriel.
2. Le Gouvernement Français fera établir à ses frais sur mon terrain, la portion du route b, d, rejoignant l'ancienne route de Tunis, près de Bordj Ben Négro.
3. Les chemins précités seront mis à ma disposition à la date du 1^{er} Octobre, 1894.

(Signé) TERENCE BOURKE.

Pour copie conforme:
Le Chef de Bataillon, Chef du Génie,
(Signé) E. DOLOZ.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Plan of Land sold by Mr. Bourke to the French Military Authorities.

[Not printed.]

No. 11.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 2.)

(No. 15.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 26, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 33 of the 20th September, 1893, reporting the expropriation by the Tunisian Government of land at Bizerta, situated on a hill called Dar-el-Coudia, for the construction of a fort which will command the entrance to the new harbour, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received a despatch from Mr. Bourke, reporting the commencement by the French military authorities of the works of the projected fortifications on that site.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 12.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 16.)

My Lord,

Tunis, March 31, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 28 of the 24th August, 1893, I have received reliable information that the purchase of the land on the shores of Lake Bizerta by the French Government for the construction of an arsenal has been completed, and that the authorities intend to connect it with the new railway by a branch line, starting from a station at a place called Awena, a distance of 5 kilom. from the site of the proposed arsenal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 13.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 7.)

(No. 84. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, March 31, 1894.

I ASKED Count Kálnoky yesterday whether he had heard anything about the fortifications projected by the French at Bizerta, and he told me that Count Nigra had communicated to him the answer which the French Government had made to that of Italy as to the apprehensions caused at Paris by the presence of so large a military force in the Island of Sicily.

Count Kálnoky added that, absurd as it seems, the French apparently believe that they are in danger of a sudden attack from Italy, and that the most extensive military precautions are taken on the Alpine frontier to prevent this.

I asked his Excellency whether this was only what he had been told by Count Nigra, and he said that he had his own information from his own agents, who described the French side of the Alpine frontier as in a condition such as is generally only seen when the outbreak of war is hourly expected. The ordinary military force in this region has been much strengthened, and troops are habitually on the move and patrolling the frontier.

With regard to Bizerta, Count Kálnoky said that the conversion of this valuable strategic spot into a first-class fortress and arsenal would certainly be only a question of time. The topical advantages are so great, that France will of course make use of them. The construction of a harbour and dock will be undertaken as soon as the entrance can be made available for large vessels, and then their protection by defensive works will become necessary. The Powers who have interests in the Mediterranean must lay their account with the prospect of a second and perhaps a more perfectly equipped Toulon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 14.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 17.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 5, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 15 of the 26th March, and to Foreign Office No. 1, Confidential, of the 16th March, I have to state that the works at Bizerta were not commenced until the 17th March. Frenchmen and Arabs are exclusively employed on the works, and the strictest privacy is observed.

According to appearances the masonry forms a semi-circle with a sufficient space for four guns of large calibre. A trench of elliptic shape has been excavated behind the workings. The railway from the main line to the new port has lately advanced considerably, and will probably be ready for traffic by the end of the year.

This line has avowedly been laid with the plausible object of opening up the district to French colonists, and developing the trade of the port, but the fact is that

everything appears to point to the formation of a naval station of great importance, and the railway now in construction is merely part of the strategical scheme.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 15.

Memorandum.—(Communicated to the Earl of Kimberley by Count Tornielli, April 18, 1894.)

(Confidentiel.)

L'AGENT et Consul-Général d'Italie à Tunis avait eu, à la fin de Mars dernier, les renseignements confidentiels qui suivent.

On est autorisé à croire que prochainement commenceront les travaux pour la construction de l'Arsenal de Bizerte. Une vaste étendue de terrains a été expropriée à cet effet et l'on vient de préparer le projet d'un embranchement de chemin de fer qui de Avena aboutira à ces mêmes terrains actuellement encore vides. Cet embranchement, de l'étendue de 5 kilom., n'aboutit à aucune localité habitée existante. Mais dans l'endroit choisi pour faire arriver le chemin de fer au lac les eaux sont très profondes et le rivage est coupé à pic.

Des expropriations de terrains ont été faites sur les hauteurs de Ben Negro.

Sur la colline du Fort d'Espagne on continue les travaux de fortifications auxquels ne sont employés que des ouvriers Français ou Arabes. On a commencé la construction de murailles en forme de demi-circles ayant un rayon assez grand pour laisser croire que l'on y placera des rails pour l'usage des affûts des grosses artilleries de côte. Pour le moment il y a quatre de ces plate-formes en construction. Elles sont placées à environ 5 mètres de distance l'une de l'autre.

Le bateau à vapeur "Ville d'Alger" était arrivé à Bizerte avec un chargement dont faisaient partie les locomotives destinées au service du chemin de fer de Tunis à cette dernière ville. C'était le premier navire entré dans le nouveau canal. Il était amarré au nouveau quai construit à côté de la future gare.

Le canal est maintenant dégagé de tout obstacle; sa profondeur moyenne est de 9 mètres.

Londres, le 18 Avril, 1894.

No. 16.

The Earl of Kimberley to the Marquis of Dufferin.

(No. 155.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, April 18, 1894.

THE French Ambassador having, at my interview with him on the 11th instant, mentioned to me that he was applying for leave for two French officers to visit our dockyards at Chatham and Portsmouth, I observed, casually, that I heard that works were commencing for creating a fortified naval port at Bizerta.

M. Decrais said that the works were merely with the object of improving the port for commercial purposes, and that there was no intention, at the present time, to erect fortifications, though, of course, France had a right if she pleased to erect them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 17.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 19.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 24, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of a letter from the Bizerta correspondent of "L'Unione" newspaper, published on the 19th instant, relating to the works of the fortifications in course of construction at Dar-el-Coudia, commonly known as the Spanish fort.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Extract from "L'Unione" of April 19, 1894.

(Translation.)

THE fortifications on the hill Dar-el-Coudia (Spanish fort) are making visible progress. Altogether they form an extensive semi-circle, which, from the outside, has the appearance of a steep slope of red earth, stated to be 25 cubic metres for each lineal metre, the whole forming a mound of firm matter, impenetrable to projectiles.

This semi-circle, which extends over upwards of 300 metres, is subdivided into the parts which constitute the batteries; these are protected by earth and made solid by masonry, probably in order to allow heavy guns to be placed in them.

At a height of 10 metres from the visible base of the slope loopholes will be constructed, one above the other, at a distance which may vary from 8 to 10 metres.

Four guns will be mounted in the battery, and the gunpowder magazine will be made in the form of a deep cavity placed behind the battery at a distance of about 15 metres from the outside margin of the slope.

Each battery will thus have its own store of ammunition.

Several superior officers of engineers are now at Bizerta inspecting the works, and they have also visited Ben Negro, where it is intended shortly to erect other fortifications.

No. 18.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 30.)

(No. 20.)

My Lord,

Tunis, April 25, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of a Beylical Decree published in the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of the 17th instant, relating to a Concession granted by the Tunisian Government to Messrs. Duparchy and Préault for the completion of the works of the port of Tunis, and for the construction of the ports of Susa and Sfax.

I beg also to inclose a précis and translation of the Agreement concluded with the concessionnaires.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 18.

Extract from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of April 17, 1894.

Décret du 12 Avril, 1894 (6 Chaoual, 1311).

Louanges à Dieu.

NOUS, Ali Pacha Bey, Possesseur du Royaume de Tunis,

Vu la Convention passée le 1^{er} Avril, 1894, entre le Directeur-Général des Travaux Publics de notre Régence et MM. Duparchy et Préault, pour l'achèvement du port de Tunis, la construction des ports de Sousse et Sfax et l'exploitation de ces trois ports, ensemble le cahier des charges et les pièces y annexées;

Nous avons pris le Décret suivant:

Article Unique.—Nous avons approuvé la Convention passée entre notre Directeur-Général des Travaux Publics et MM. Duparchy et Préault pour l'achèvement du port de Tunis, la construction des ports de Sousse et Sfax, et l'exploitation de ses trois ports.

Une copie de cette Convention, revêtue de notre sceau, restera annexée au présent Décret.

Vu pour promulgation et mise à exécution:
Tunis, le 12 Avril, 1894.

Le Résident-Général de la République Française,
(Signé) CH. ROUVIER.

CONCESSION DES PORTS DE TUNIS, SOUSSE, ET SFAX.

Convention.

ENTRE les Soussignés :

M. Pavillier, Directeur-Général des Travaux Publics de la Régence de Tunis, agissant au nom du Gouvernement Tunisien, sous réserve de l'approbation de Son Altesse le Bey, d'une part, et M. Alexis Duparchy, entrepreneur, demeurant à Paris, 65, Avenue de l'Alma, et M. Simon Préault, entrepreneur, demeurant à Paris, 74, Rue de Rome, agissant en leur nom personnel et solidairement, d'autre part.

Il a été convenu ce qui suit :—

Article 1^{er}.—*Nature de la Concession.*

Le Gouvernement Tunisien concède à MM. Duparchy et Préault, qui acceptent, l'achèvement du port de Tunis, la construction des ports de Sousse et Sfax, l'exploitation de ces trois ports et celle des terrains du Domaine Public voisins actuellement disponibles ou qui pourront être conquis sur la mer et sur le lac de Tunis dans les limites arrêtées par le Gouvernement Tunisien. Cette Concession est faite aux clauses et conditions inscrites dans les présentes et dans le cahier des charges annexé.

Article 2.—*Remise au Concessionnaire des Ouvrages existants.*

Le Gouvernement Tunisien remettra au concessionnaire dans le mois qui suivra l'approbation de la présente Convention les trois ports concédés avec leurs installations, ainsi que le matériel fixe, mobile, ou flottant existant dans les dits ports et que le Gouvernement pourra laisser affecté à leur exploitation.

Le concessionnaire pourra être tenu de verser dans les caisses du Trésor sur la demande du Gouvernement Tunisien, une somme fixée à forfait à 400,000 fr.

Article 3.—*Remise au Concessionnaire des Terrains de la Concession.*

Le Gouvernement Tunisien remettra au concessionnaire :—

1. Dans le mois qui suivra l'approbation de la présente Convention, les terrains du Domaine Public actuellement disponibles ;
 2. Dans le mois qui suivra leur réception les terrains que l'exécution des travaux aura fait conquérir ;
 3. Dans le mois qui suivra leur réception les terrains que le dit concessionnaire aura été autorisé à conquérir en dehors de l'exécution des travaux.
- Ces remises seront faites sous les conditions et réserves stipulées au cahier des charges.

Article 4.—*Réserve relative aux Magasins Généraux.*

Le Gouvernement Tunisien se réserve le droit d'autoriser, s'il en reconnaît l'utilité, l'établissement de magasins généraux et d'entrepôts réels sur les emplacements disponibles dans les terrains concédés, à charge pour les concessionnaires de ces établissements de payer pour les terrains occupés une location dont le prix sera fixé par le Gouvernement Tunisien, le concessionnaire des ports entendu.

Dans le cas où ce dernier serait autorisé à faire de telles installations, les magasins généraux ou entrepôts réels ainsi établis, seront considérés comme étant en dehors de la présente Concession, tant au point de vue des frais de premier établissement et d'exploitation, qu'en ce qui concerne les recettes correspondantes.

Article 5.—*Interdiction de Cession Partielle ou Totale.*

Toute cession partielle ou totale de la Concession, tout changement de concessionnaire ne pourront avoir lieu qu'avec l'approbation du Gouvernement Tunisien.

L'inobservation de ces conditions entraînerait la nullité de la cession et pourrait donner lieu à la déchéance.

Article 6.—*Substitution d'une Société au Concessionnaire.*

Avant de procéder à aucune mesure d'exécution et au plus tard dans le délai de trois mois à partir de l'approbation de la présente Convention, le concessionnaire sera tenu de se substituer une Société Anonyme organisée conformément à la loi Française, dont la durée soit égale à celle de la Concession. Cette substitution devra être approuvée par le Gouvernement Tunisien.

Si cette Société ne pouvait être définitivement constituée dans le délai fixé ci-dessus, la Concession provisoirement accordée par les présentes deviendrait nulle de plein droit.

Article 7.—*Constitution du Capital Social.*

Le concessionnaire n'aura droit qu'au remboursement de ses avances, dont le compte, appuyé des pièces justificatives, aura été approuvé par l'assemblée générale des actionnaires et accepté par le Gouvernement Tunisien.

Il ne pourra être créé, sous aucune forme, des actions libérées ou à libérer autrement qu'en argent.

La fraction effectivement versée du capital-actions de la dite Société ne pourra pas être inférieure à 3,000,000 fr. Le tiers de cette somme, soit 1,000,000 fr., sera déposé dans les caisses du Gouvernement Tunisien, dans le mois qui suivra la substitution de la Société au concessionnaire provisoire. Ce dépôt sera fait en titres de l'État Français ou Tunisien, au cours moyen du jour du versement. Il ne sera pas productif d'intérêts, mais les coupons des titres seront remis à la Société concessionnaire, sur sa demande, à leur échéance.

Le surplus du capital nécessaire à l'exécution des travaux au delà de 3,000,000 fr., pourra être réalisé par des émissions successives d'obligations. Aucune émission ne pourra avoir lieu qu'en vertu d'une autorisation du Gouvernement Tunisien et cette autorisation ne pourra être obtenue : pour la première émission qu'après l'entier emploi des quatre cinquièmes de la portion effectivement versée du capital-actions, soit 2,400,000 fr. en travaux, matériel, et installations ; pour les émissions suivantes, qu'après l'entier emploi dans les mêmes conditions de la totalité des fonds provenant des émissions précédentes.

Toutefois si la Société concessionnaire voulait profiter de circonstances favorables du marché financier pour émettre tout ou partie de ses obligations avant l'emploi total en travaux, matériel, et installations, soit des quatre cinquièmes de la portion du capital-actions qui devra être effectivement versée, soit de la totalité des sommes provenant des émissions déjà autorisées, elle ne pourrait en obtenir l'autorisation qu'à la condition de déposer les fonds provenant de ces émissions anticipées dans les caisses du Gouvernement Tunisien aux mêmes conditions que la partie déjà déposée du capital-actions.

En aucun cas, il ne pourra être créé d'obligations pour une somme totale correspondant à une annuité de plus de 275,000 fr., amortissement compris, pendant la durée de la Concession.

Si le Gouvernement Tunisien venait à faire usage de la faculté qu'il s'est réservée d'exiger du concessionnaire le versement dans les caisses du Trésor d'une somme de 400,000 fr. conformément à l'Article II de la présente Convention, le montant à autoriser des émissions d'obligations serait porté au chiffre correspondant à une annuité de 295,000 fr. amortissement compris.

Article 8.—*Capital Complémentaire.*

Le capital de premier établissement sera éventuellement augmenté, sur l'injonction du Gouvernement Tunisien, d'une somme d'au plus 3,000,000 fr. destinée aux dépenses de parachèvement, d'amélioration, et d'installations complémentaires de toute nature qui pourront être ordonnées par le Gouvernement Tunisien, le concessionnaire entendu, au fur et à mesure du développement du trafic des ports ou pour les besoins d'un service public.

Ce capital complémentaire pourra être successivement réalisé par voie d'obligations dans la limite des dépenses autorisées et aux conditions indiquées par le présent Article et le précédent.

Article 9.—*Garantie du Marché et Paiement des Travaux faits.*

La somme de 1,000,000 fr. déposée dans les caisses du Gouvernement Tunisien, restera affectée à la garantie du marché, tant que les dépenses en travaux, matériel, et installations, évalués comme il est dit au cahier des charges annexé à la présente Convention, n'excéderont pas 1,000,000 fr.

Elle sera ensuite remboursée au Concessionnaire par acomptes proportionnels au montant des dépenses faites en travaux, matériel, et installations, diminué de 1,000,000 fr. jusqu'à concurrence des deux cinquièmes de cette différence sans que les remboursements ainsi faits puissent réduire au-dessous de 350,000 fr. le dépôt de garantie jusqu'à la réception définitive des ouvrages qui sera faite par les agents du Contrôle Tunisien.

A l'expiration du délai de garantie fixé à un an après l'achèvement complet des travaux, ce dépôt sera remboursé au concessionnaire, sauf une somme de 250,000 fr., qui restera affectée à la garantie de l'exploitation jusqu'à l'expiration de la Concession.

Les fonds qui, conformément à l'Article 7 ci-dessus auraient pu être déposés dans les caisses du Gouvernement Tunisien comme provenant d'émissions anticipées, seront remboursés au concessionnaire par acomptes qui, ajoutés aux versements antérieurs, tant en actions qu'en obligations, ne devront pas dépasser le montant des dépenses totales effectuées en travaux, matériel, et installations au moment de la délivrance de chacun de ces acomptes.

Les remboursements dont il vient d'être parlé, seront opérés par la simple restitution des titres déposés, au cours admis pour la mise en dépôt; il ne sera pas tenu compte des variations de cours, favorables ou défavorables survenues depuis la dite mise en dépôt.

Article 10.—*Garantie du Gouvernement.*

Le Gouvernement Tunisien garantit au concessionnaire pour l'intérêt et l'amortissement du capital de premier établissement un revenu annuel de 405,000 fr. jusqu'à l'expiration de la Concession.

Le revenu garanti serait porté à 425,000 fr. si le Gouvernement Tunisien faisait usage de la faculté qu'il s'est réservée d'exiger du concessionnaire le versement de 400,000 fr. prévu à l'Article II de la présente Convention.

La garantie commencera à courir à partir de l'achèvement des travaux de chaque port jusqu'à concurrence des chiffres ci-après, savoir:—

							Francs.
Port de Tunis	..	..	..	..	..	..	136,080
.. Sousse	..	..	..	..	..	..	191,160
.. Sfax	..	..	..	..	..	..	77,760

Si la Société livrait à l'exploitation certains ouvrages d'un port avant l'achèvement complet des travaux de ce port, la garantie commencerait à fonctionner à partir de la mise en service des dits ouvrages et pour une fraction proportionnelle à la valeur de ces ouvrages.

Le cahier des charges détermine le montant de la garantie qui pourra être ainsi payée pour chacun des ouvrages prévus dans les trois ports.

Si le Gouvernement Tunisien faisait usage de la faculté qu'il s'est réservée par l'Article 2 ci-dessus, d'exiger du concessionnaire le versement de 400,000 fr. la garantie correspondante commencerait à courir du jour de ce versement dans les caisses du Trésor.

Le Gouvernement garantit également au concessionnaire l'intérêt à 3-615 pour cent des dépenses qui seront faites sur le capital de 3,000,000 fr. réservés pour travaux complémentaires et l'amortissement calculé au même taux d'intérêt de ces dépenses pendant la durée restant à courir de la Concession.

Cette garantie s'exercera à partir de la réception des travaux effectués, par les ingénieurs du Contrôle Tunisien.

Elle sera calculée sur le montant des dépenses faites, évaluées comme il est dit au cahier des charges annexé à la présente Convention.

Les garanties de revenu qui commenceront à s'exercer dans le courant d'une année seront calculées, pour cette première année, au prorata du nombre de jours restant à courir entre l'origine de la garantie fixée ci-dessus et le 31 Décembre de la dite année.

Article 11.—*Terrains Domaniaux.*

Le concessionnaire aura la gestion des terrains domaniaux qui lui seront remis, conformément à l'Article III de la présente Convention.

Le produit de la location de ces terrains sera porté à la recette des ports.

Le Gouvernement Tunisien se réserve le droit de désaffecter partie de ces terrains sur la demande du concessionnaire et d'en autoriser la vente.

Il sera formé trois parts égales du produit des ventes ainsi autorisées.

Le premier tiers sera acquis purement et simplement au concessionnaire.

Le deuxième tiers sera attribué au Gouvernement Tunisien qui en laissera toutefois la libre disposition au concessionnaire, mais diminuera de plein droit le revenu annuel qu'il garantit, d'une somme représentant l'intérêt à 3-615 pour cent et l'amortissement calculé au même taux d'intérêt de ce tiers pendant le temps restant à courir sur la Concession.

Le troisième tiers sera affecté à la constitution d'un fonds de garantie. Il sera versé au Gouvernement Tunisien sous l'obligation par lui d'en employer le montant dans les deux mois du versement, au cours de la Bourse de Paris qu'il jugera le plus avantageux en achat de titres de l'État Français ou Tunisien à son choix. Le Gouvernement Tunisien restera dépositaire de ces titres jusqu'à l'expiration de la Concession; leur revenu sera porté chaque année à la recette des ports.

A l'expiration de la Concession, ce fonds de garantie sera partagé par moitié entre le Gouvernement Tunisien et le concessionnaire.

Pour les terrains conquis par des travaux autres que ceux qui correspondent à l'exécution des ouvrages des ports, le concessionnaire prélèvera d'abord sur le produit des ventes ou locations une somme de 2 fr. par mètre carré, à titre de remboursement sans intérêts des frais de constitution de ces terrains.

Il sera fait emploi du surplus conformément aux stipulations du présent Article concernant les autres catégories de terrains.

Article 12.—*Remboursement des Insuffisances et Partage des Bénéfices.*

Il y aura insuffisance quand le montant du compte des recettes de la Concession pour une année, impôts déduits, s'il y a lieu, ne suffira pas à couvrir les dépenses valablement portées au compte d'exploitation de l'année augmentées du revenu garanti conformément à l'Article 11.

Il y aura bénéfice net quand les recettes, impôts déduits, excéderont les dépenses d'exploitation augmentées du revenu garanti.

Les insuffisances seront supportées par le Gouvernement Tunisien à titre d'avances remboursables; les bénéfices nets, dès qu'il s'en produira, seront d'abord affectés à rembourser au dit Gouvernement les insuffisances supportées par lui, sans intérêts.

Ce remboursement une fois fait, l'excédent du bénéfice net jusqu'à concurrence de 520,000 fr., sera partagé par moitié entre le Gouvernement et la Société concessionnaire.

Le surplus sera attribué à l'État seul sans partage avec la Société, dont la part dans les bénéfices nets est ainsi limitée au maximum de 260,000 fr.

Fait en double à Tunis, le 1^{er} Avril, 1894.

Le Directeur-Général des Travaux Publics,
(Signé) PAVILLIER.

Les Concessionnaires,
(Signé) DUPARCHY.
PRÉAULT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 18.

Précis of Concession made by the Tunisian Government to Messrs. Alexis Duparchy and Simon Préault for the completion of the Port of Tunis and the construction of the Ports of Susa and Sfax.

Nature of the Concession.

(Translation.)

CONCESSION for the completion of the port of Tunis, the construction of the ports of Susa and Sfax, the working of these ports and of the adjacent Government lands, which are available or may be acquired, situated by the sea or the lake of Tunis within the limits fixed by the Government.

In the month following the approval of the Convention the Tunisian Government will deliver to the concessionnaires the three ports, with all their appurtenances, movable, immovable, or floating. The concessionnaires may be called upon to pay into the Treasury the sum of 16,000*l*.

Delivery of Lands included in the Concession.

The Government will deliver to the concessionnaires—

The first month, after the approval of the Convention: the available Government lands.

The second month: the land acquired by the progress of the works.

The third month: the land granted in addition to that for the port works.

Reserves.

The Government reserves the right of authorizing the establishment of stores and depôts on the conceded land, for which the holders will pay a rent fixed by the Government.

Rights of Transfer.

No partial or total transfer of the Concession can take place except with the approval of the Government.

Company.

The concessionnaires will be bound to form a Company, subject to the approval of the Government.

Capital of the Company.

The capital of the Company shall be not less than 120,000*l*.

This capital will eventually be increased, by order of the Government, by an additional 120,000*l*.

Guarantees.

The sum of 40,000*l*. deposited in the Treasury will remain as a guarantee to the Government.

At the expiration of a year after the completion of the works this sum will be restored, with the exception of 10,000*l*., which will remain as a further guarantee.

The Government guarantees an annual revenue of 16,000*l*., liable to an increase of 17,000*l*.

This guarantee will commence at the termination of the works of each port.

The guaranteed revenues are:—

	£	s.	d.
Port of Tunis	5,443	4	0
„ Susa.. .. .	7,646	8	0
„ Sfax.. .. .	3,110	8	0
Total	16,200	0	0

Rights of Sale.

The Government reserves the right to authorize a sale of a portion or the whole of the land, the concessionnaires obtaining one-third of the proceeds and the Government two-thirds.

Tunis, April 1, 1894.

No. 19.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 23.)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 4, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 16 of the 31st March, I have been informed that engineers have been commissioned by the Tunisian Government to visit Lake Ishkel and ascertain the feasibility of raising its water-level one metre and a-half, in order to obtain hydraulic power for the works of projected arsenal through the River Tinja which flows into Trueta Sea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 20.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 24.)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 9, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 39 of the 21st October last, and to previous correspondence regarding the Mining Regulations instituted in May 1893 for the Regency of Tunis, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of the French Resident's reply to a Memorandum I handed him, couched in the language I was instructed to hold by Sir P. W. Currie's despatch No. 8 of the 28th July, 1893.

On communicating to Mr. Mifsud the reply of the Tunisian Government, he expressed satisfaction that they no longer ignored his mining rights under the old law, but he feared that permits had been lately issued by the Mining Department to two Frenchmen to explore certain parts of his property which had not been included in his original Petition to the Government.

I informed Mr. Mifsud—who appeared desirous to avoid any action which might give rise to a troublesome question—that his claim had been firmly supported by Her Majesty's Government, and that the French Resident, in his reply to my note, had not contested his privileges in the matter.

I was therefore of opinion that further protests would not be to his advantage in the present stage of the question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Memorandum.

LA demande de permis de recherches introduite par Mr. Mifsud et Mr. Tabre, son co-associé, n'a pas été perdue de vue; les échantillons que les pétitionnaires avaient déposés ont été analysés au service des mines; mais comme ils ne contenaient qu'une

teneur en zinc insignifiante, les demandeurs ont été invités, le 8 Décembre dernier, à en fournir d'autres, ce qu'ils n'ont pas encore fait.

Les craintes qu'exprime Mr. Mifsud ne sont donc pas motivées, puisque le retard apporté à l'instruction de l'affaire provient uniquement de ce que les échantillons réclamés n'ont pas encore été fournis, et que le permis de recherches ne pourra être accordé qu'au premier demandeur, c'est-à-dire, à Mr. Mifsud lui-même, si l'examen, par le Service des Mines, des échantillons qu'il doit fournir, suivi de l'enquête sur place démontre l'existence de gisements de minerais sur les points indiqués.

(Signé) CH. ROUVIER.

Tunis, le 6 Avril, 1894.

No. 21.

Intelligence Division to Foreign Office.—(Received May 21.)

(Confidential.)

THE Director of Military Intelligence presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and begs to forward an extract from a Report, dated the 10th May, 1894, received from the Intelligence Officer, Malta, relating to a statement made by Comte d'Aspromont, a gentleman of the Italian Diplomatic Service.

*Intelligence Division, 18, Queen Anne's Gate,
May 19, 1894.*

Inclosure in No. 21.

Extract from Report by Intelligence Officer at Malta.

(Confidential.)

HE (Count d'Aspromont) informed me that he had been to the Sahara and did not think the French would make much of their possessions to the south of Algeria and Tunis, as the climate of the Sahara is villainous and unsuited to Europeans. He is of opinion that the French would like to get hold of Ghadamès on the border of Tripoli, as they wish to deflect the trade, which now passes through it to Tripoli, towards Tunis.

He endeavoured to get to Ghadamès from Tunis, but was turned back by the French. He was now travelling to Tripoli to try to effect his object of getting to Ghadamès through Turkish territory.

He says there is a very bitter feeling between French and Italians in Tunis.

No. 22.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 18, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the construction of a fort has been commenced at Bizerta, on the site purchased by the military authorities from Mr. Bourke, as reported in my despatch No. 14 of the 20th March.

Rumours are also current that Capes Blanc and Zebib, situated respectively to the west and east of Bizerta Bay, will form part of the defences of the port.

Official inspections of those sites have lately taken place, but the decision of the authorities regarding them is still unknown.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 23.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 27.) P.

My Lord,

Tunis, May 23, 1894.

INFORMATION reaches me from a source on which I can rely that the Peninsula of Cape Boa has recently been surveyed by French officers. Their operations seem to point to the construction of a semaphore or a fortress on the extremity of the point.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 24.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 28.)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 23, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a cutting from the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of the 23rd instant relative to the arrival at Tripoli of the chief of the Clere expedition, and his subsequent departure for France. This person had lately visited Gabes and applied for permission to cross the Tunisian frontiers and penetrate into the interior by way of Ghadames, but his request was refused by the French Commanding Officer of the district, who, as I had the honour of reporting in my despatch No. 13 of the 19th March, has opposed all European expeditions extending beyond the Tunisian and Algerian military posts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Extract from the "Dépêche Tunisienne" of May 23, 1894.

Mai 16.—M. J. Leclercq, le chef de la Mission Clere, est arrivé ici Mardi dernier. Il est reparti le même jour pour Marseille et Paris.

Il n'est question ici que de Ghadamès. Occupera-t-on, n'occupera-t-on pas ? Dans la colonie Européenne, en dehors de l'Italienne, on est très partisan de l'occupation ; on la juge indispensable. Quant aux Turcs, ils ne disent mot.

M. le Dr. Rossi, correspondant de la Société Italienne d'Exploration en Afrique, et du journal "La Sera," de Milan, est depuis près de trois semaines en notre ville.

No. 25.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 34.)

My Lord,

Tunis, June 23, 1894.

HAVING recently visited Biserta and neighbourhood, I am able to report that the works of the two fortresses commanding the approaches to the harbour are being actively pushed forward. I ascertained from a French source that they will each be mounted with four large and four small guns, and constructed on the same lines as the fortress of Rades near Tunis. Judging from the area of land occupied by the works, I am inclined to think that their dimensions are underrated. The railway to Tunis will probably be opened next autumn for general traffic, but the navigation of the Canal by large ships of war may be considerably delayed by the unexpected discovery of a rock bottom in the centre of the passage.

After leaving Biserta I rode to the site destined for the construction of a dock-yard or arsenal at the southern extremity of the lake, as reported in my despatch No. 16 of 31st March and previous correspondence. The land purchased by the

Tunisian Government consists of a narrow strip extending from the remains of a large Roman fortress, situated on the edge of the water now called Sidi Abdallah, up to the River Tinja. The property is about 6 miles in length and from 250 to 300 yards wide everywhere, excepting where small promontories increase the breadth.

The site of the proposed harbour is called Mzouka, and well known to the natives for its great depth of water. Although the authorities have endeavoured to keep the project secret, I found that a rumour had reached inhabitants of the district that the Government had purchased the site for the purpose of constructing docks and ship-building yards.

I propose to forward a week hence, without referring to correspondence on this subject, a map of the district, showing the exact position of the site.

I also heard that French torpedo-boats had lately passed through the River Tinja and entered the Lake Ishkel, where they had been seen taking soundings.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 26.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 35.)

My Lord,

Tunis, June 30, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 15 of the 2nd March, reporting the construction of a fort on a height at Bizerta called Dar-el-Coudia, I have the honour to inclose copies of a Beylical Decree, extracted from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of the 26th instant, classing the battery as a military post.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Extract from the "Journal Officiel Tunisien" of June 26, 1894.

Décret du 22 Juin, 1894 (19 Hidjé, 1311).

Louanges à Dieu.

NOUS, Ali Pacha Bey, possesseur du Royaume de Tunis,

Vu notre Décret du 2 Septembre, 1886 (3 Hidjé, 1303)

Sur la proposition de notre Ministre de la Guerre et l'assentiment du Gouvernement Français;

Nous avons pris le Décret suivant :

Article 1^{er}. La batterie du Dar-el-Coudia est classée comme poste militaire.

Art. 2. Notre Ministre de la Guerre est chargé de l'exécution du présent Décret.

Vu pour promulgation et mise à exécution.

Le Résident-Général de la République Française,

(Signé) CH. ROUVIER.

Tunis, le 22 Juin, 1894.

No. 27.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Tunis, July 23, 1894.

THE approaching completion of the Port of Bizerta and its opening to navigation have given rise to some discussion regarding its prospects as a commercial port, owing to the threatened withdrawal of the three direct weekly mail-steamers which ply between Marseilles and Tunis, in favour of a line from Marseilles to Tunis, calling at Bizerta.

It has been argued by persons conversant with the commercial and agricultural status of the Regency, that the fact of Bizerta being destined for a naval port deprives it of all claim to commercial competition with Tunis, which will inevitably maintain its position as the chief emporium of trade in the country.

Tunis has 160,000 inhabitants, of whom about 40,000 are Europeans, and an import and export trade valued at about 1,500,000*l*.

Vast plains of great fertility, and the rich Valley of the Medjerda River, celebrated formerly as the granary of Rome, are in direct communication by rail with the city and its newly constructed harbour.

The Tunisian Government has already expended a sum of about 500,000*l*. in the formation of the canal and shipping basin, and when the quays and remaining works lately undertaken are completed, the Port of Tunis will undoubtedly offer every facility and advantage to navigation as a mercantile port.

Bizerta and its two great lakes are situated in a mountainous district studded with olive plantations, and beyond the lakes extend large plains of excellent pasture land, suitable for cattle-breeding, where several European colonists have already settled. The population of the town is now estimated at about 7,000 souls, including French, Maltese, and Italians, and its imports and export may be computed at a value of about 70,000*l*.

There is every probability when the railroad and port are respectively opened for traffic and navigation, that a fresh impetus will be given to the commerce and agriculture of Bizerta, and that the resources of the district will be considerably developed by the improvements in communication both by land and sea.

It has however been rightly contended that the export trade of Northern Tunisia is not likely to be diverted from the capital, the railway junction at Djedeida being distant 42 miles from Bizerta, and only 15 from Tunis. All roads, moreover, leading to the latter city, offer superior facilities for the transport of goods by wheeled vehicles and camels.

The import trade is also unlikely to be affected by the opening of the Port of Bizerta so long as Tunis remains the seat of the Government and centre of the Civil and Military Administrations.

The destiny of Bizerta has been correctly forecasted in a Report lately transmitted to Paris by the Tunisian Chamber of Agriculture, in supporting the superior claims of Tunis to a direct mail-service with Marseilles. The following paragraph is worthy of quotation:—

"Bizerta can only assume the character of a military port, such as Toulon, Brest, and Cherbourg in France, and Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Spezzia in foreign countries.

"It is well known that ships of war and mercantile vessels are unable to occupy conveniently the same harbour, owing to the strict regulations enforced at a military port. Bizerta owns a position of unprecedented strategical value to France. It will form a link with Toulon, which will render the French navy preponderant in this part of the Mediterranean, where three coasts already belong almost entirely to France. It is the counterbalance to Gibraltar and Malta, the defence of Algeria, which possesses only artificial ports, incapable of giving shelter to more than one vessel of war.

"The possession of Bizerta from this point of view would not be too highly paid at a price of 4,000,000*l*.

"Tunisia has created the port from her own resources for a sum of 500,000*l*., has surrendered it for the profit of France, and now only demands in return that her metropolis may not be prejudiced by the gift."

I believe that the generality of Frenchmen, and others who have studied the

question, are of opinion that, although the Bizerta Port Company who have certain influence at Paris may succeed with the support of the French Government in realizing a scheme for rivalling Malta as a coaling-station and port of call for the innumerable vessels that have to pass in close proximity to Cape Blanc, Bizerta will, nevertheless, become a naval harbour of great importance, and with no more pretensions to compete commercially with Tunis than Toulon with Marseilles.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 28.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received August 7.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord,

Tunis, August 2, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 17 of the 12th June, 1893, on the defences of the new canal and port of Tunis, I have the honour to report that the works of the fort at Carthage, named "Bordj Djedid," are far advanced towards completion, and that two guns of large calibre were lately conveyed to Carthage from the dépôt at Manuba, and are now mounted on the battery.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 29.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 41. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tunis, August 11, 1894.

WITH reference to an article in the "Correspondance Verte" of Rome, which mentions that the newly appointed Italian Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to impress upon the Sultan the necessity for opposing energetically the pretensions of France to the contested zone on the Tunis-Tripoli frontier, and for defending the important commercial route leading through the Cyrenæic territory to the Soudan, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that French agents have been actively employed lately in the southern districts of the Regency seeking to establish relations with Ghadamès and the Soudan, their ulterior object being, undoubtedly, the occupation of the principal routes leading to the Soudan, and, by diverting the trade from Tripoli, to extend French influence over the "Hinterland" of that country.

The time is now approaching when the realization of these schemes will be greatly facilitated by the development of the Tunisian railway system, and the prolongation of the high roads leading to the southern frontiers.

During my residence in this country, and particularly since visiting the south of the Regency last year, I have gathered from influential natives who trade with Tripoli, including Ghadamès, Ghat, and the Fezzan, that a peaceful extension of French influence would not be likely to meet with opposition from the inhabitants of those districts, if tacitly acquiesced in by Turkey, but that should the latter resent the encroachments, her rights would have to be firmly supported by a Great Power in order to encourage and convince the natives, already overawed by the unopposed invasion of Tunisia by France.

I have further been given to understand that the only Power likely to inspire that confidence would be Great Britain, the belief being prevalent amongst Mussulmans throughout these countries that the English have no aggressive designs on North Africa, but would be interested with Turkey in checking the spread of French dominion beyond the eastern boundaries of the Tunisian "Hinterland."

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 30.

Intelligence Division to Foreign Office.—(Received August 22.)

THE Acting Director of Military Intelligence presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, with reference to a previous correspondence relating to Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 302 of 1894, begs to forward herewith an extract from a Report from Malta which bears on the Tunis-Tripoli boundary question.

*Intelligence Division, 18, Queen Anne's Gate, London,
August 21, 1894.*

Inclosure in No. 30.

Extract from a Report from Captain J. S. Ewart, Cameron Highlanders, Intelligence Officer, Malta.

"DÉPÊCHE TUNISIENNE," 16th May.—A correspondent writing from Tripoli says:—

"The only question here is that of Ghadamès. Shall we occupy it or shall we not? In the European colony, except amongst the Italians, every one is in favour of occupation. It is judged to be indispensable. As for the Turks, they say nothing."

"Dépêche Tunisienne," 15th June.—It is reported from Tripoli that the Turkish Customs officials found the fort of Kassar-du-Gardan occupied by a detachment of French Spahis. Kassar-du-Gardan is in Turkish territory. The inhabitants of Ghadamès are alarmed.

"Dépêche Tunisienne," 29th June.—Has an editorial note in which it claims that Ghadamès and Rhat are both within the sphere of French influence, and that Ghadamès must not be allowed to become a centre of anti-French action.

(Note.—There is little doubt that there has been considerable excitement amongst Italians at home and in Tripoli lately regarding French designs upon Ghadamès, and the Kasar-beu-Gherdan, or Kassar-du-Gardan (as it is sometimes spelt), incident has increased the excitement. The French Tunisian paper denies French designs upon Tripoli, but in my opinion we should watch France closely, as we require Tripoli as a buffer State between Egypt and Tunis.)

No. 31.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received September 10.)

(No. 43.)

My Lord,

Tunis, September 5, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 40 of the 2nd August, I have to report that the construction of the new fortress at Carthage is completed. Four large guns of 34 centim. calibre are now mounted on the side of the battery facing the sea. I have further learnt that the remains of a Roman cistern situated under the cliff have been converted into a powder magazine; it is composed of fifteen vaults of solid masonry. These have been thoroughly restored and divided into an equal number of compartments with separate entrances.

Subterraneous stairs lead from the battery to the magazine, a depth of 15 metres. The fortress is 51 metres above the level of the sea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 32.

The Earl of Kimberley to Mr. Edwardes.

(No. 207. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 10, 1894.

THE Italian Ambassador called at this Office on the 4th instant, and stated that his Government had received reports that the French were endeavouring to create a movement for the eventual inclusion of Ghadamès in Tunisian territory; that, with this object, Envoys were sent to influence the tribes in the neighbourhood; and that, as these tribes were heavily taxed by the Tripolitan authorities, the efforts of these Agents were likely to have considerable effect.

In reply to Count Tornielli's inquiry as to what was the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on the subject, he was informed of the general purport of the inclosed Reports from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tunis,* with the exception, however, of the concluding portion of Mr. Drummond Hay's last despatch No. 41 of the 11th August as to the influence of Great Britain.

Count Tornielli seemed to think that his Government would be glad if instructions were sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to bring the matter confidentially to the notice of the Porte at any convenient opportunity.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 33.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 284. Confidential.)

Sir

Foreign Office, September 12, 1894.

THE Italian Government have received reports that the French are endeavouring to create a movement for the eventual inclusion of Ghadamès in Tunisian territory; that, with this object, Envoys have been sent to influence the tribes in the neighbourhood, and that, as these tribes are heavily taxed by the Tripolitan authorities, the efforts of these agents are likely to have considerable effect.

The inclosed copies of reports from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tunis contain the most recent information on the subject which has been received by Her Majesty's Government.*

In accordance with the desire of the Italian Government, your Excellency is authorized to bring the matter confidentially to the notice of the Porte, at any convenient opportunity.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 34.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received October 8.)

(No. 451.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 3, 1894.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 284, Confidential, of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to report that I mentioned yesterday to Saïd Pasha the information contained in Mr. Drummond Hay's despatches as to the steps taken by French Agents in Tunis to establish trade relations with Ghadamès.

His Excellency said that he was aware of what was going on in that quarter, and he expressed regret that the proposals which had been made by the Porte some years ago, in regard to the recognition of a "Hinterland" of Tripoli extending to Lake Tchad, had met with no encouragement from Her Majesty's Government. I said that, as far as I remembered, those proposals were made without sufficient consideration, and were not of a practicable kind.

His Excellency, while he fully recognized the danger of French encroachments, did not hold out much expectation that any steps would be taken by the Ottoman Government to restrain them.

I have informed M. Catalani of what passed. He said that he had not as yet made any communication to the Turkish Government respecting Tripolitan affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 35.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 311 A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 10, 1894.

THE Turkish Ambassador called to-day, and saw Sir T. Sanderson in my absence. His Excellency inquired whether there was any foundation for a report which had appeared in a Berlin newspaper that the Italian Government was meditating an expedition against Tripoli, with the consent of Her Majesty's Government.

Sir T. Sanderson replied that he could affirm positively that nothing of the kind had ever been suggested; that the Turkish Government might rest assured that our policy was directed to the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, and that he believed that to be also the policy of Italy.

Sir T. Sanderson added that the only communication received by Her Majesty's Government from that of Italy, on the subject of Tripoli, was a confidential suggestion that we should call the attention of the Porte to French intrigues and designs of encroachment in the neighbourhood of Ghadamès.

Rustem Pasha expressed his thanks for this assurance.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 36.

The Earl of Kimberley to Count Tornielli.

(Confidential.)

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, October 16, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to state, for your confidential information, with reference to the private inquiries which you have made at this Office, that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has mentioned to Saïd Pasha the information contained in the recent reports received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tunis in regard to the steps taken by French Agents in the Regency to establish trade relations with Ghadamès.

Saïd Pasha observed that he was aware of what was going on in that quarter, but, while he fully recognized the danger of French encroachments, he did not hold out much expectation that any steps would be taken by the Ottoman Government to restrain them.

Sir Philip Currie has also informed M. Catalani of what had passed at his interview with Saïd Pasha, and M. Catalani stated, in reply, that he had not as yet made any communication to the Turkish Government respecting Tripolitan affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 37.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 317.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 22, 1894.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 451 of the 3rd instant, I have to acquaint you that the Italian Ambassador called at this Office on the 15th instant, and said that M. Catalani had reported what had passed between yourself and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting French intrigues in the neighbourhood of Ghadamès.

M. Catalani had also reported a conversation on the same subject between the German Ambassador and the Grand Vizier. The latter had expressed some fear of Italian designs on Tripoli, and had been informed by Prince Radolin that he need be under no apprehensions as regards Italy, who was bound by the Triple Alliance to maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean so long as the Porte resisted French encroachments. But the Italian Government thought it very desirable that the Porte should endeavour to come to an agreement with France as to the delimitation of their respective claims, not merely on the frontier between Tunis and Tripoli, but in the "Hinterland" of those countries, so as to prevent Tripoli being cut off from the interior, and reduced to a mere strip on the coast.

They wished to suggest that your Excellency should receive instructions to press this point upon the attention of the Porte.

I am inclined to think that if the Porte could be induced to take the line suggested by the Italian Government, it might be of assistance in the discussions on African questions now proceeding at Paris, and I should wish you, therefore, to urge upon them the importance of endeavouring to come to an understanding with France upon this important question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 38.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received October 26.)

(No. 48.)

My Lord,

Tunis, October 22, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 35 of the 30th June, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that several guns are expected at Bizerta for the new forts of that place.

Judging from the dimensions of a gun carriage that has lately appeared and which is said to weigh about 46 tons, the guns will probably be of large calibre.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 39.

Mr. Edwardes to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received October 29.)

(No. 219. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Rome, October 25, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a letter, and of its inclosure, which I have received from Baron Blanc relative to the delimitation of Tripoli.

I have thanked his Excellency for his communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. EDWARDES.

Inclosure 1 in No. 39.

Signor Blanc to Mr. Edwardes.

(Particulière.)

Cher Mr. Edwardes,

Le 23 Octobre, 1894.

JE vous envoie confidentiellement un petit aide-mémoire relatif à la question de délimitation de la Tripolitaine.

Cordialement à vous,
(Signé) BLANC.

Inclosure 2 in No. 39.

Memorandum.

(Très Confidentiel.)

L'AMBASSADEUR d'Italie à Constantinople a informé le Gouvernement du Roi que ses collègues d'Angleterre et d'Allemagne viennent de faire des démarches auprès de la Sublime Porte pour l'engager à assurer, comme il est de son devoir, l'intégrité de ses droits dans la Tripolitaine, y compris "l'Hinterland" de cette province Ottomane.

Le Grand Vizir aurait répondu au Comte Radolin que la France et la Turquie se trouvent d'accord dans la question de la frontière Tripolitaine, car le petit différend à cet égard ne concerne qu'une zone de 30 kilom. d'étendue.

Saïd Pacha aurait répondu à Sir P. Currie qu'il connaissait bien les empiétements des Français dans la Tripolitaine et dans son "Hinterland" et qu'il en attribuait la cause à la délimitation Anglo-Française du 5 Août, 1890.

M. Catalani ayant demandé à Sir P. Currie de proposer à la Sublime Porte de reprendre avec la France les négociations pour une délimitation entre la Tunisie et la Tripolitaine, l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre lui répondit qu'il n'avait pas reçu d'instructions à cet égard de son Gouvernement. Il serait à désirer que de telles instructions fussent données par le Foreign Office à l'Ambassade Britannique à Constantinople.

Une dépêche à cet effet a été adressée le 8 courant à l'Ambassade d'Italie à Londres, mais la réponse n'en est pas encore parvenue au Ministère Royal des Affaires Étrangères.

Rome, le 22 Octobre, 1894.

No. 40.

The Earl of Kimberley to Mr. Edwardes.

(No. 67.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, October 30, 1894.

TUNIS-TRIPOLI frontier delimitation: your despatch No. 219 of 25th October.

Sir P. Currie has been instructed in the sense desired, and Count Tornielli has been so informed. Despatch going to you by next bag.

No. 41.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 51.)

My Lord,

Tunis, November 15, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 48 of the 22nd October, I have received news of the arrival at Bizerta of four guns of 25-centim. bore for the forts of Dar-el-Condia and Djebel Roumadia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 42.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 53.)

My Lord,

Tunis, November 28, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, on the 24th instant, the Resident-General, M. Millet, accompanied by his staff, left by special train for Bizerta. At Mateur he was met by many French colonists and natives. The Kalifa, addressing him in French, spoke of the benefits which the country had derived from the French Protectorate, and asserted that the native population was completely devoted to the French Government and Colony. M. Millet, in reply, spoke of the regeneration of the financial condition of the country, and attributed it to the cordial union of the French and natives.

[413]

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From Mateur the Resident continued his journey to Wad Tindja, on the Lake of Bizerta, where he was met by the contractor and the engineer of the new port. He then descended the course of the river by boat as far as the lake, where he embarked on board the torpedo-boat No. 122, on which he made his formal entry into Bizerta.

In the evening M. Millet was entertained to a banquet, and in his replies to the addresses of the colonists and the Municipality, said that in visiting Bizerta, eight days after his arrival, he was desirous of showing the especial interest which he took in its town and port. He had seldom, in the course of his many voyages, seen a port so admirable in every respect, and which could only be compared with Rio de Janeiro and Brest. The natural advantages of the country would be fully developed by time, and everything in his power would be done to promote the best interests of that part of the country. M. Millet further added that the interests of the Port Company were identical with those of the town by their object to attract a large number of vessels by reason of the lowest possible Tariff.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 43.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord,

British Consulate-General, Tunis, December 12, 1894.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 37 of the 10th October, 1893, reporting that an increase in the Army of Occupation was contemplated in French military circles, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that according to "La Dépêche Tunisienne," the official organ of the French Government, an important step towards the realization of the scheme will be shortly taken by the appointment of a General of Division, and that General Leclerc, Commander of the Brigade, will be selected for the post.

The chief reasons assigned for these measures are the numerous military stations in the Regency, the vast territories under the General's supervision, and the strategical importance of the Tripolitan frontiers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.